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COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND COMMERCE

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET

Congress of the United States

House of Representatives

February 28, 2006

Walter D. Cruickshank,
Acting Director, Minerals Management Service
Department of the Interior
Attention: Rules Processing Team
381 Elden Street, MS--4024
Herndon, VA 20170-4817

Re: Alternate Energy-Related Uses on the Outer Continental Shelf--1010--AD30

Dear Mr. Cruickshank:

I am writing to express my general comments in response to the Minerals Management Service's Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking relating to alternate energy-related uses on the Outer Continental Shelf.

I am proud to represent a portion of California's 1,100 mile coastline that is heavily dependent on its coastal waters, which are extremely sensitive and support incredible marine wildlife and biodiversity. As you know, California is home to four important national marine sanctuaries, national estuaries and wetlands, and the California Coastal Monument, all of which would be degraded by new energy-related uses on the OCS.

In addition to threatening our environment, additional offshore development could harm our valuable coastal economy, which depends heavily on tourism, fishing and other coastal industries. According to a report commissioned by the State's Resources Agency, the total Gross State Product of California's ocean economy was approximately \$42.9 billion, directly and indirectly supports more than 700,000 jobs and generates more than \$24 billion in wages and salaries each year.

Given the broad environmental and economic effects that any new offshore development could have on California's coastline, MMS must ensure its regulatory framework accounts for the following as it considers alternate energy development on the OCS:

- protects the marine and coastal environment, as well as public health;
- ensure projects are developed in appropriate locations, without conflicts to commercial and recreational fishing, boating, shipping, tourism and other marine uses;

- ensure certain areas, such as National Marine Sanctuaries and Marine Protected Areas, are excluded from alternate energy development;
- fully protects the public interest;
- complies with current bans on new offshore oil and gas pre-leasing, leasing and related activities on certain areas of the OCS (OCS moratoria);
- upholds NEPA alternatives requirements and public comments; including an analysis of increased conservation as a possible option;
- maintains a States' right to consistency review under the Coastal Zone Management Act;
- is consistent with the recommendations of the President's Commission on Ocean Policy;
- considers impacts to marine wildlife, including habitat;
- considers ocean pollution from construction, siting, and decommissioning of offshore oil and gas production facilities;
- provides for a meaningful role for other Federal agencies, including the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in the decision-making process; and
- occurs through processes that guarantee ample state, local government and public input in each area where new offshore energy development is proposed.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Lois Capps". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Lois" and last name "Capps" clearly distinguishable.

LOIS CAPPS
Member of Congress